

“MYSTERY & MINISTRY”

Colossians Chapter 4:2-18

I) THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST (v2-6)

(v2) **PRAY** continuously - “*earnestly*”; **PRAY** carefully – “*thanksgiving*”; **PRAY** corporately - “*us*”; **PRAY** conscientiously – “*open door*.”

(v3-4) Proclaim the “**MYSTERY OF CHRIST**” – Jesus participated fully in all that it means to live a human life. But if Jesus were merely a man, no matter how great, there would be no significance in drawing attention to His bodily existence. The marvelous thing is that in Jesus, God Himself began to live a fully human life. As the apostle Paul declared, “*In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*” (Col 2:9). The capacity of Jesus to reveal God to us and to bring salvation depends upon His being fully God and fully man at the same time. Our human minds cannot understand how Jesus can be both fully God and fully man. But the Bible gives clear indication of how this works out in practice.

(v5) “Walk in **WISDOM**” (Proverbs 1)

(v6) Speak with the **GRACE** of GOD and with the **SALT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** as needed.

II) MINISTERS THAT MINISTER (v7-18)

➤ **Observe their character and what they do:**

(Insight on Paul – He made it a point to make **FRIENDS**; its been estimated that over a 100 different Christians were associated with Paul in the Book of Acts and in his epistles.)

(v7-8) **TYCHICUS** – Beloved brother – faithful minister – fellow servant – reliable – a comforting soul.

(v9) **ONESIMUS** (found in Paul’s letter to Philemon) – Faithful and beloved brother – another reliable.

(v10a) **ARISTARCHUS** – a Macedonian of Thessalonica who traveled with the apostle Paul on his third missionary journey through Asia Minor (Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2). He was with Paul during the riot at Ephesus (Acts 19:29); later, he preceded Paul to Troas (Acts 20:4-6). A faithful companion and friend, Aristarchus accompanied Paul to Rome (Acts 27:2), where he attended the apostle and shared his imprisonment.

(v10b) **MARK** – This is Mark who wrote the Gospel and we read about in the Book of Acts.

(v11) **JUSTUS** – Fellow worker – comforting; he was A Jewish Christian in Rome.

(v12-13) **EPAPHRAS** – Bondservant of Christ – prayer warrior – what does he pray for? – he has a “great zeal” for fellow believers.

(v14a) **LUKE** the beloved physician, author of the Gospel and Acts, a traveling companion of Paul.

(v14b) **DEMAS** - a friend and co-worker of the apostle Paul at Rome. Demas later deserted Paul, “*having loved this present world*” (2 Timothy 4:10; Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24).

(v15) **NYMPHAS** – A church was in his home in Laodicea (Awesome!).

➤ **How does a leader develop INSPIRATION, and how does he maintain it?** What separates leaders from non-leaders is that a leader knows how to inspire himself. He has learned the secret of keeping his own furnace hot and ablaze. ***Here are some suggestions for developing inspiration:***

1. Maintain a vibrant and fresh devotional life, because God is the source of all life (Jn 15:5; Phil. 4:13)
2. Be a realist. Gather all the facts. Do not fear the truth. Inspiration is not built on fantasy.
3. Be an optimist. Believe that all things do work for good (Ro. 8:28). Obstacles become opportunities. Stumbling blocks become steppingstones.
4. Be a man of faith. Attempt big things for God, and expect big things from God.
5. Avoid negative people, and surround yourself with positive people.
6. Cultivate a happy home life. The hot embers for our lives come from heaven and the home.
7. Keep a healthy and refreshed body. Body chemistry and inspiration are related.
8. Dwell on your successes, not on your failures. Consider failures simply as gaining experience for future success. You cannot win if you do not try, and if you try, you will sometimes fail.
9. Read inspirational literature.
10. Think positively of others. Look for the good in people. They are made in the image of God!²

(v16) Read this epistle to the church and other churches.

(v17) Fulfill your calling, fulfill your ministry.

Developing Your Leadership Skills

(From the book *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders)

- 1- Have you ever broken a bad habit? To lead others, you must master your appetites.
- 2- Do you keep self-control when things go wrong? The leader who losses control under adversity forfeits respect and influence. A leader must be calm in crisis and resilient in disappointment.

- 3- Do you think independently? A leader must use the best ideas of others to make decisions. A leader cannot wait for others to make up his or her mind.
- 4- Can you handle criticism? Can you profit from it? The humble person can learn from petty criticism, even malicious criticism.
- 5- Can you turn disappointment into creative new opportunity?
- 6- Do you readily gain the cooperation of others and win their respect and confidence?
- 7- Can you exert discipline without making a power play? True leadership is an internal quality of the spirit and needs no show of external force.
- 8- Are you a peacemaker? A leader must be able to reconcile with opponents and make a peace where arguments have created hostility.
- 9- Do people trust you with difficult and delicate situations?
- 10- Can you induce people to do happily some legitimate thing that they would not normally wish to do?
- 11- Can you accept opposition to your viewpoint or decision without taking offense? Leaders always face opposition.
- 12- Can you make and keep friends? Your circle of loyal friends is an index of your leadership potential.
- 13- Do you depend on the praise of others to keep you going? Can you hold steady in the face of disapproval and even temporary loss of confidence?
- 14- Are you at ease in the presence of strangers? Do you get nervous in the presence of your superior?
- 15- Are the people who report to you generally at ease? A leader should be sympathetic and friendly.
- 16- Are you interested in people? All types? All races? No prejudice?
- 17- Are you tactful? Can you anticipate how your words will affect a person?
- 18- Is your will strong and steady? Leaders cannot vacillate or cannot drift with the wind.
- 19- Can you forgive? Or do you nurse resentments and harbor ill feelings toward those who have injured you?
- 20- Are you reasonably optimistic? Pessimism and leadership do not mix.
- 21- Do you feel a master passion such as that of Paul, who said, "This one thing I do!" Such a singleness of motive will focus your energies and powers on the desired objective. Leaders need a strong focus.
- 22 - Do you welcome responsibility?

(v18) Pray for everyone, especially for those who are persecuted.

"GRACE BE WITH YOU. AMEN."